

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

11-7

Orleans

EAS.1313

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Address: 75 Old Orchard Road

Historic Name: Edward and Frances Whiting House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1951

Source: Title research, Eastham Tax Commitment Books

Style/Form: No Style

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Concrete block

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
Large rear additions (mid-late 20th c.)

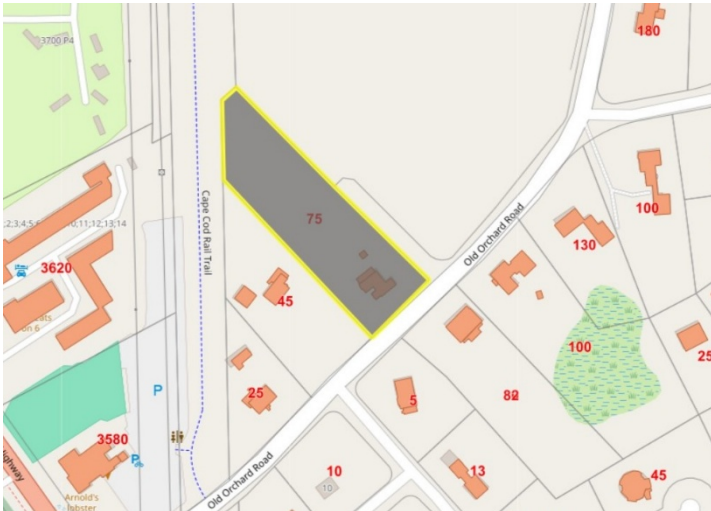
Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 1.16 acres

Setting: This parcel is located on the north side of Old Orchard Road just east of the State Highway. The deep parcel extends northwest to the former railroad tracks. The house is set fairly close to the street, and the parcel is left open with lawn in front of the house. A driveway leads past the west side of the house. The remainder of the parcel is left in its natural, wooded state.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

75 OLD ORCHARD ROAD

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Edward and Frances Whiting House, built in ca. 1951, is a one-story cottage that appears to have originally consisted of the main block and stepped-down side ell, possibly with the rear ell also in place. A secondary ell was later built off the side of the rear ell. The house rests on a concrete block foundation. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The low-pitched gable roofs are clad in asphalt shingles. A low brick chimney rises from the rear roof of the main block, and an exterior brick chimney rises from the end gable of the newest ell.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

Title research traces back to 1938 when Edward W. Whiting acquired the land through a tax foreclosure sale by the Town of Eastham.¹ The United States Geological Survey (USGS) began conducting Cape-wide aerial photographic surveys in 1938. In that first series, there are no houses in this location, but by the next series in 1952, this house was in place (Photo 3). He appears to have built this house the year before he sold it. In the 1951 Eastham Tax Commitment books, Whiting is first shown to have a dwelling.

Edward Wallace Whiting (1908-1977) was the son of Braintree-born Charles S. Whiting (1873-1948). Charles had married Hingham-born Minnie Simmons Young (1873-1966) in Braintree in 1904. As of the 1910 census, they were living in a rented house in Peabody, and he was working in a shoe factory. By 1920, they were living in a rented house in Weymouth, and he was working as an assistant storekeeper for a shipyard. By the time they moved to Eastham, he appears to have retired.

Their son, Edward, was living with them on Oak Road as of the 1930 census, and he was working as a shell fisherman. He married Frances Newcomb in 1938, and they were still living with his parents as of the 1940 census. Edward was working as a truck driver for a retail lumber company and Frances (1913-1982) was a machine operator for a curtain factory.

In 1952, the Whitings sold this property to John and Marion Grozier of Eastham.² In the summer of 1956, a plan was prepared subdividing Whiting's land into five parcels with this house on Lot 4 (Figure 2), and the Groziers sold Lots 1, 2, 4, and 5 to Charles

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 537/ Page 204.

² Book 825/ Page 219.

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W. Chase of Eastham.³ Eastham-born Charles W. Chase (1928-1988) married Norma Acorn (1931-2022) in Eastham in 1948. In the 1950 census, they were both listed as owners of a restaurant. This refers to the Lobster Shanty which they opened in 1947 (located at the intersection of Rt. 6 and Salt Pond Road near the National Seashore Salt Pond Visitor Center).

The Provincetown Independent ran a story about The Lobster Shanty in 2023 which included the following account:

Charles, who was known as Buddy, was a born entrepreneur. He started out selling fruit, then eggs, and, later, chicken pies at a stand on nearby land owned by his parents, Leslie and Mabel Chase, according to [daughter Nancy] Rutledge. The Chases' 1820 farmhouse stood at 40 Salt Pond Road. Despite rumors that a colonial-era tavern for pirates and mooncussers once stood at this spot, it appears that Buddy Chase was the first to operate a business here, said Rutledge. "He would sell anything," said Rutledge. "He wanted to sell Cape Cod air in a can. He talked about that a lot."

Out of the fruit and egg stand, Buddy built the Hillside into the kind of diner that had hamburgers, ice cream, and cake displayed under a glass dome on the counter, said Marca Daley, the archivist for the Eastham Historical Society and Rutledge's childhood friend. When the Cape Cod National Seashore was set to level the hill by the highway around 1961 to build the visitor center across Route 6, Buddy bought a house with a gambrel roof that stood on the fated hill and had it moved across the highway to expand his business.

He eventually opened a souvenir shop along with a motel with seven units and one apartment - and then a bike rental business, which still exists today. It is now called the Little Capistrano Bike Shop and is run by his daughter, Melissa Ayala.⁴

Norma Chase, now Norma Emond, held onto this house until 2002 when she sold it to the current owners, John and Melanie Woods, then of Provincetown and now of Plymouth.⁵

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www.ancestry.com - Vital records.

³ Book 953/ Page 572.

⁴ K. C. Myers, "This Old Eastham House: The Lobster Shanty", *The Provincetown Independent*, March 2, 2023.

⁵ Book 19023/ Page 77.

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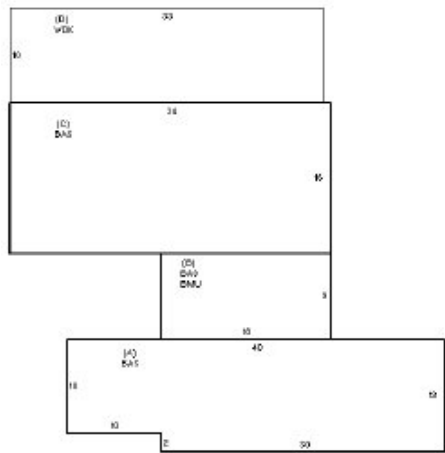


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View from Old Orchard Road, looking northwest.



Photo 3. Detail of 1952 USGS aerial survey (arrow to 75 Old Orchard Road added).

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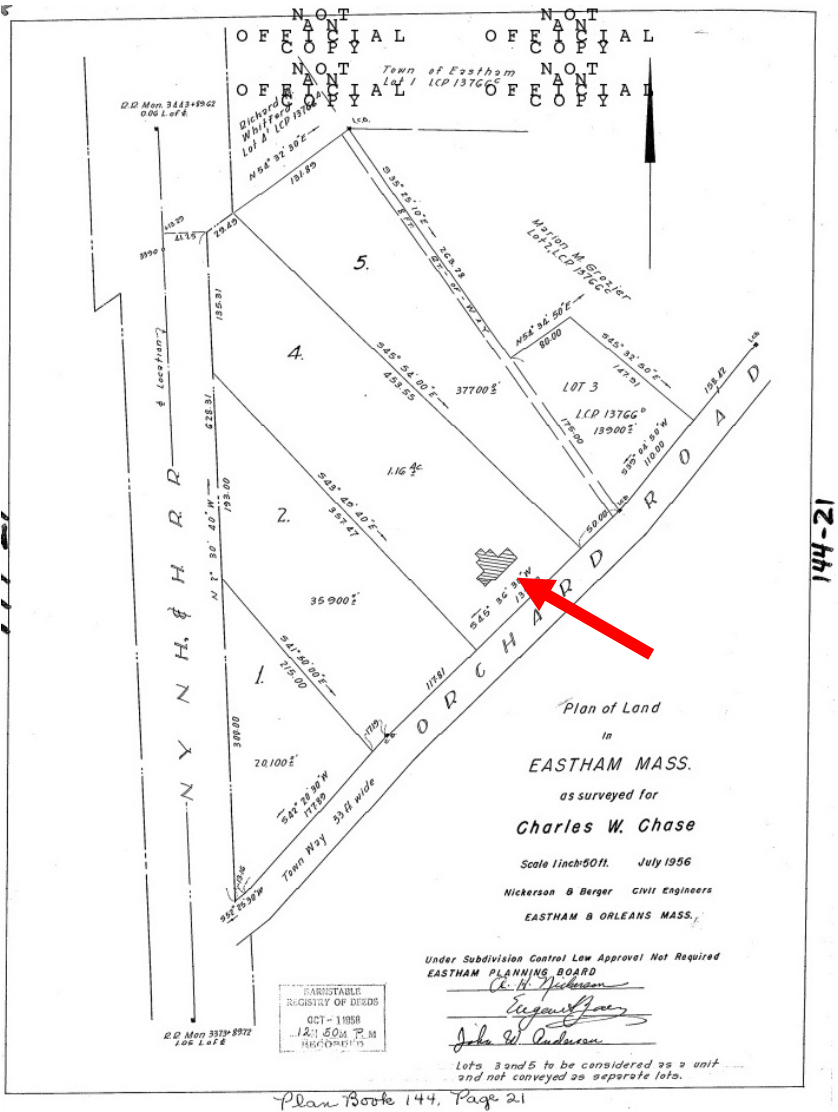


Figure 2. July 1956 subdivision plan (arrow to 75 Old Orchard Road added)/